

Amendments to the Claims/Listing Claims:

By the present communication, claims 6-9, 113, 115, 118, 123 and 154 have been cancelled. Claims 10-24, 31, 34, 37, 39-41, 43, 44, 53, 66-93, 95, 98, 100-102, 104, 105, 110-112, 116, 117, 120, 127, 129, 130, 132-141, 143, 145-147, 149, 150, and 153 have been withdrawn. Claims 111 and 116 have been amended. Thus, claims 1-5, 25-30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 38, 42, 45-52, 54-65, 94, 96, 97, 99, 103, 106-109, 114, 119, 121, 122, 124-126, 128, 131, 142, 144, 148, 151, and 152 remain pending in the present application.

1. (Original) A method, comprising:
coupling an end of a first tubular member to an end of a tubular sleeve;
coupling an end of a second tubular member to another end of the tubular sleeve;
threadably coupling the ends of the first and second tubular members; and
radially expanding and plastically deforming the first tubular member and the second tubular member.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the tubular sleeve comprises an internal flange.
3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein coupling the end of the first tubular member to the end of the tubular sleeve comprises:
inserting the end of the first tubular member into the end of the tubular sleeve into abutment with the internal flange.
4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein coupling the end of the second tubular member to the other end of the tubular sleeve comprises:
inserting the end of the second tubular member into the other end of the tubular sleeve into abutment with the internal flange.
5. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein coupling the end of the second tubular member to the other end of the tubular sleeve comprises:
inserting the end of the second tubular member into the other end of the tubular sleeve into abutment with the internal flange.
6. - 9. (Cancelled)
10. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein coupling the end of the first tubular member to the end of the tubular sleeve comprises:
inserting a retaining ring between the end of the first tubular member and the end of the tubular sleeve.
11. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10, wherein coupling the end of the second tubular member to the other end of the tubular sleeve comprises:

inserting another retaining ring between the end of the second tubular member and the other end of the tubular sleeve.

12. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein coupling the end of the second tubular member to the other end of the tubular sleeve comprises:
inserting a retaining ring between the end of the first tubular member and the other end of the tubular sleeve.
13. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10, wherein the retaining ring is resilient.
14. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 11, wherein the retaining ring and the other retaining ring are resilient.
15. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 12, wherein the retaining ring is resilient.
16. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein coupling the end of the first tubular member to the end of the tubular sleeve comprises:
deforming the end of the tubular sleeve.
17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 16, wherein coupling the end of the second tubular member to the other end of the tubular sleeve comprises:
deforming the other end of the tubular sleeve.
18. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein coupling the end of the second tubular member to the other end of the tubular sleeve comprises:
deforming the other end of the tubular sleeve.
19. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein coupling the end of the first tubular member to the end of the tubular sleeve comprises:
coupling a retaining ring to the end of the first tubular member.
20. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19, wherein coupling the end of the second tubular member to the other end of the tubular sleeve comprises:
coupling another retaining ring to the end of the second tubular member.
21. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein coupling the end of the second tubular member to the other end of the tubular sleeve comprises:
coupling a retaining ring to the end of the second tubular member.
22. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19, wherein the retaining ring is resilient.
23. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 20, wherein the retaining ring and the other retaining ring are resilient.
24. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 21, wherein the retaining ring is resilient.

25. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein coupling the end of the first tubular member to the end of the tubular sleeve comprises:
heating the end of the tubular sleeve; and
inserting the end of the first tubular member into the end of the tubular sleeve.
26. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein coupling the end of the second tubular member to the other end of the tubular sleeve comprises:
heating the other end of the tubular sleeve; and
inserting the end of the second tubular member into the other end of the tubular sleeve.
27. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein coupling the end of the second tubular member to the other end of the tubular sleeve comprises:
heating the other end of the tubular sleeve; and
inserting the end of the second tubular member into the other end of the tubular sleeve.
28. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein coupling the end of the first tubular member to the end of the tubular sleeve comprises:
inserting the end of the first tubular member into the end of the tubular sleeve; and
latching the end of the first tubular member to the end of the tubular sleeve.
29. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein coupling the end of the second tubular member to the other end of the tubular sleeve comprises:
inserting the end of the second tubular member into the end of the tubular sleeve;
and
latching the end of the second tubular member to the other end of the tubular sleeve.
30. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein coupling the end of the second tubular member to the other end of the tubular sleeve comprises:
inserting the end of the second tubular member into the end of the tubular sleeve;
and
latching the end of the second tubular member to the other end of the tubular sleeve.
31. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the tubular sleeve further comprises one or more sealing members for sealing the interface between the tubular sleeve and at least one of the tubular members.
32. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
placing the tubular members in another structure; and
then radially expanding and plastically deforming the first tubular member and the second tubular member.
33. (Original) The method of claim 32, further comprising:
radially expanding the tubular sleeve into engagement with the structure.

- 34. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 32, further comprising:
sealing an annulus between the tubular sleeve and the other structure.
- 35. (Original) The method of claim 32, wherein the other structure comprises a wellbore.
- 36. (Original) The method of claim 32, wherein the other structure comprises a wellbore casing.
- 37. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the tubular sleeve further comprises a sealing
element coupled to the exterior of the tubular sleeve.
- 38. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the tubular sleeve is metallic.
- 39. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the tubular sleeve is non-metallic.
- 40. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the tubular sleeve is plastic.
- 41. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the tubular sleeve is ceramic.
- 42. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
breaking the tubular sleeve.
- 43. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the tubular sleeve includes one or more longitudinal slots.
- 44. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the tubular sleeve includes one or more radial
passages.
- 45. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein radially expanding and plastically deforming the first tubular member, the second tubular member, and the tubular sleeve comprises:
displacing an expansion cone within and relative to the first and second tubular members.
- 46. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein radially expanding and plastically deforming the first tubular member, the second tubular member, and the tubular sleeve comprises:
applying radial pressure to the interior surfaces of the first and second tubular member using a rotating member.
- 47. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
amorphously bonding the first and second tubular members during the radial expansion and plastic deformation of the first and second tubular members.
- 48. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
welding the first and second tubular members during the radial expansion and plastic

deformation of the first and second tubular members.

49. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
providing a fluid tight seal within the threaded coupling between the first and second tubular members during the radial expansion and plastic deformation of the first and second tubular members.
50. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
placing the tubular sleeve in circumferential tension;
placing the end of the first tubular member in circumferential compression; and
placing the end of the second tubular member in circumferential compression.
51. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
placing the tubular sleeve in circumferential compression;
placing the end of the first tubular member in circumferential tension; and
placing the end of the second tubular member in circumferential tension.
52. (Original) A method, comprising:
providing a tubular sleeve comprising an internal flange positioned between the ends of the tubular sleeve;
inserting an end of a first tubular member into an end of the tubular sleeve into abutment with the internal flange;
inserting an end of a second tubular member into another end of the tubular sleeve into abutment the internal flange;
threadably coupling the ends of the first and second tubular members;
radially expanding and plastically deforming the first tubular member and the second tubular member;
placing the tubular sleeve in circumferential tension;
placing the end of the first tubular member in circumferential compression; and
placing the end of the second tubular member in circumferential compression.
53. (Withdrawn) A method, comprising:
providing a tubular sleeve comprising an external flange positioned between the ends of the tubular sleeve;
inserting an end of the tubular sleeve into an end of a first tubular member until the end of the first tubular member abuts with the external flange;
inserting another end of the tubular sleeve into an end of the second tubular member until the end of the second tubular member abuts the external flange;
threadably coupling the ends of the first and second tubular members;
radially expanding and plastically deforming the first tubular member and the second tubular member;
placing the tubular sleeve in circumferential compression;
placing the end of the first tubular member in circumferential tension; and
placing the end of the second tubular member in circumferential tension.
54. (Original) An apparatus, comprising:

a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member.

55. (Original) The apparatus of claim 54,
wherein the tubular sleeve is in circumferential tension;
wherein the end portion of the first tubular member is in circumferential compression;
and
wherein the end portion of the second tubular member is in circumferential compression.
56. (Original) The apparatus of claim 54,
wherein the tubular sleeve is in circumferential compression;
wherein the end portion of the first tubular member is in circumferential tension; and
wherein the end portion of the second tubular member is in circumferential tension.
57. (Original) The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the tubular sleeve comprises an internal flange.
58. (Original) The apparatus of claim 57, wherein the end portion of the first tubular member is received within an end of the tubular sleeve; and wherein the end portion of the second tubular member is received within another end of the tubular sleeve.
59. (Original) The apparatus of claim 58, wherein the end portions of the first and second tubular members abut the internal flange of the tubular sleeve.
60. (Original) The apparatus of claim 57, wherein the end portion of the first tubular member is received within an end of the tubular sleeve.
61. (Original) The apparatus of claim 60, wherein the end portions of the first and second tubular members abut the internal flange of the tubular sleeve.
62. (Original) The apparatus of claim 57, wherein the end portion of the second tubular member is received within an end of the tubular sleeve.
63. (Original) The apparatus of claim 62, wherein the end portions of the first and second tubular members abut the internal flange of the tubular sleeve.
64. (Original) The apparatus of claim 57, wherein the internal flange of the tubular sleeve is positioned between the ends of the tubular sleeve.
65. (Original) The apparatus of claim 57, wherein the internal flange of the tubular sleeve is positioned at an end of the tubular sleeve.

66. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the tubular sleeve comprises an external flange.
67. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 66, wherein an end portion of the tubular sleeve is received within the first tubular member; and wherein another end portion of the tubular sleeve is received within the end portion of the second tubular member.
68. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 67, wherein the end portions of the first and second tubular members abut the external flange of the tubular sleeve.
69. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 66, wherein an end portion of the tubular sleeve is received within the end portion of the first tubular member.
70. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 69, wherein the end portions of the first and second tubular members abut the external flange of the tubular sleeve.
71. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 66, wherein an end portion of the tubular sleeve is received within the end portion of the second tubular member.
72. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 71, wherein the end portions of the first and second tubular members abut the external flange of the tubular sleeve.
73. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 66, wherein the external flange of the tubular sleeve is positioned between the ends of the tubular sleeve.
74. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 66, wherein the external flange of the tubular sleeve is positioned at an end of the tubular sleeve.
75. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the tubular sleeve further comprises one or more sealing members for sealing the interface between the tubular sleeve and at least one of the tubular members.
76. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 54, further comprising:
a retaining ring positioned between the end of the first tubular member and the end of the tubular sleeve.
77. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 76, further comprising:
another retaining ring positioned between the end of the second tubular member and the other end of the tubular sleeve.
78. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 54, further comprising:
a retaining ring positioned between the end of the first tubular member and the other end of the tubular sleeve.

79. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 76, wherein the retaining ring is resilient.
80. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 77, wherein the retaining ring and the other retaining ring are resilient.
81. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 78, wherein the retaining ring is resilient.
82. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the end of the tubular sleeve is deformed onto the end of the first tubular member.
83. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 82, wherein the other end of the tubular sleeve is deformed onto the end of the second tubular member.
84. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the other end of the tubular sleeve is deformed onto the end of the second tubular member.
85. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 54, further comprising:
a retaining ring coupled to the end of the first tubular member for retaining the tubular sleeve onto the end of the first tubular member.
86. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 85, further comprising:
another retaining ring coupled to the end of the second tubular member for retaining the other end of the tubular sleeve onto the end of the second tubular member.
87. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 54, further comprising:
a retaining ring coupled to the end of the second tubular member for retaining the other end of the tubular sleeve onto the end of the second tubular member.
88. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 85, wherein the retaining ring is resilient.
89. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 86, wherein the retaining ring and the other retaining ring are resilient.
90. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 87, wherein the retaining ring is resilient.
91. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 54, further comprising:
a locking ring for coupling the end of the first tubular member to the end of the tubular sleeve.
92. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 91, further comprising:
another locking ring for coupling the end of the second tubular member to the other end of the tubular sleeve.
93. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 54, further comprising:

a locking ring for coupling the end of the second tubular member to the other end of the tubular sleeve.

94. (Original) The apparatus of claim 54, further comprising:
a structure for receiving the first and second tubular members and the tubular sleeve;
wherein the tubular sleeve contacts the interior surface of the structure.
95. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 94, wherein the tubular sleeve further comprises:
a sealing member for fluidically sealing the interface between the tubular sleeve and
the structure.
96. (Original) The apparatus of claim 94, wherein the other structure comprises a wellbore.
97. (Original) The apparatus of claim 94, wherein the other structure comprises a wellbore casing.
98. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the tubular sleeve further comprises a sealing element coupled to the exterior surface of the tubular sleeve.
99. (Original) The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the tubular sleeve is metallic.
100. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the tubular sleeve is non-metallic.
101. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the tubular sleeve is plastic.
102. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the tubular sleeve is ceramic.
103. (Original) The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the tubular sleeve is frangible.
104. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the tubular sleeve comprises one or more
longitudinal slots.
105. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the tubular sleeve comprises one or more radial passages.
106. (Original) The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the first and second tubular members are amorphously bonded.
107. (Original) The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the first and second tubular members are welded.
108. (Original) The apparatus of claim 54, wherein the internal threads of the first tubular member and, the internal threads of the second tubular member together provide a fluid tight seal.

109. (Original) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve comprising an internal flange positioned between the ends of the tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member received within an end of the tubular sleeve in abutment with the internal flange that comprises internal threads; and
a second tubular member received within another end of the tubular sleeve in abutment with the internal flange that comprises external threads that engage the internal threads of the first tubular member;
wherein the tubular sleeve is in circumferential tension;
wherein the end of first tubular member is in circumferential compression; and
wherein the end of the second tubular member is in circumferential compression.
110. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve comprising an external flange positioned between the ends of the tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member that receives an end of the tubular sleeve and abuts the external flange that comprises internal threads; and
a second tubular member that receives another end of the tubular sleeve that abuts the external flange that comprises external threads that engage the internal threads of the first tubular member;
wherein the tubular sleeve is in circumferential compression;
wherein the first tubular member is in circumferential tension; and
wherein the second tubular member is in circumferential tension.
111. (Withdrawn) A method of extracting geothermal energy from a subterranean source of geothermal energy, comprising:
drilling a borehole that traverses the subterranean source of geothermal energy;
positioning a first casing string within the borehole;
radially expanding and plastically deforming the first casing string within the borehole;
positioning a second casing string within the borehole that traverses the subterranean source of geothermal energy;
overlapping a portion of the second casing string with a portion of the first casing string;
radially expanding and plastically deforming the second casing string within the borehole; and
extracting geothermal energy from the subterranean source of geothermal energy using the first and second casing strings;
wherein at least one of the first and second casing strings comprise a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member.
112. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 111, wherein the interior diameter of a passage defined by the first and second casing strings is constant.

113. (Cancelled)

114. (Original) A method of extracting geothermal energy from a subterranean source of geothermal energy, comprising:

- drilling a borehole that traverses the subterranean source of geothermal energy;
 - positioning a first casing string within the borehole;
 - radially expanding and plastically deforming the first casing string within the borehole;
 - positioning a second casing string within the borehole that traverses the subterranean source of geothermal energy;
 - overlapping a portion of the second casing string with a portion of the first casing string;
 - radially expanding and plastically deforming the second casing string within the borehole; and
 - extracting geothermal energy from the subterranean source of geothermal energy using the first and second casing strings;
- wherein the interior diameter of a passage defined by the first and second casing strings is constant; and
- wherein at least one of the first and second casing strings comprise:
- a tubular sleeve comprising an internal flange positioned between the ends of the tubular sleeve;
 - a first tubular member received within an end of the tubular sleeve in abutment with the internal flange that comprises internal threads; and
 - a second tubular member received within another end of the tubular sleeve in abutment with the internal flange that comprises external threads that engage the internal threads of the first tubular member.

115. (Cancelled)

116. (Withdrawn) An apparatus for extracting geothermal energy from a subterranean source of geothermal energy, comprising:

- a borehole that traverses the subterranean source of geothermal energy;
 - a first casing string positioned within the borehole; and
 - a second casing positioned within the borehole that overlaps with the first casing string that traverses the subterranean source of geothermal energy;
- wherein the first casing string and the second casing string are radially expanded and plastically deformed within the borehole;
- wherein at least one of the first and second casing strings comprise a tubular sleeve;
- a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
- a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member.

117. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 116, wherein the interior diameter of a passage defined by the first and second casing strings is constant.

118. (Cancelled)

119. (Original) An apparatus for extracting geothermal energy from a subterranean source of geothermal energy, comprising:

- a borehole that traverses the subterranean source of geothermal energy;
- a first casing string positioned within the borehole;
- a second casing string within the borehole that traverses the subterranean source of geothermal energy that overlaps with the first casing string;
- wherein the first and second casing strings are radially expanded and plastically deformed within the borehole;
- wherein the inside diameter of a passage defined by the first and second casing strings is constant; and
- wherein at least one of the first and second casing strings comprise:
 - a tubular sleeve comprising an internal flange positioned between the ends of the tubular sleeve;
 - a first tubular member received within an end of the tubular sleeve in abutment with the internal flange that comprises internal threads; and
 - a second tubular member received within another end of the tubular sleeve in abutment with the internal flange that comprises external threads that engage the internal threads of the first tubular member.

120. (Withdrawn) An apparatus for extracting geothermal energy from a subterranean source of

geothermal energy, comprising:

- a borehole that traverses the subterranean source of geothermal energy;
- a first casing string positioned within the borehole; and
- a second casing string positioned within the borehole that traverses the subterranean source of geothermal energy that overlaps with the first casing string;
- wherein the interior diameter of a passage defined by the first and second casing strings is constant; and
- wherein at least one of the first and second casing strings comprise:
 - a tubular sleeve comprising an external flange positioned between the ends of the tubular sleeve;
 - a first tubular member received within an end of the tubular sleeve in abutment with the internal flange that comprises internal threads; and
 - a second tubular member received within another end of the tubular sleeve in abutment with the internal flange that comprises external threads that engage the internal threads of the first tubular member.

121. (Original) A method of radially expanding and plastically deforming a first tubular member and a second tubular member, comprising:

- coupling an end of the first tubular member with an end of a tubular sleeve;
- coupling an end of the second tubular member with another end of the tubular sleeve;
- placing the tubular members within a wellbore; and

displacing an expansion device through the interiors of the first and second tubular members
to radially expand and plastically deform portions of the first and second tubular members.

122. (Original) The method of claim 121, wherein the ends of the first and second tubular members are received within the ends of the tubular sleeve.

123. (Cancelled)

124. (Original) The method of claim 121, wherein, before, during, and after the radial expansion of the portions of the first and second tubular members, a fluid tight seal is provided by the interface between the tubular sleeve and the ends of the first and second tubular members.

125. (Original) A method of radially expanding and plastically deforming a first tubular member and a second tubular member, comprising:
coupling an end of the first tubular member with an end of a tubular sleeve;
coupling an end of the second tubular member with another end of the tubular sleeve;
and
displacing an expansion device through the interiors of the first and second tubular members
to radially expand and plastically deform portions of the first and second tubular members;
wherein, before, during, and after the radial expansion of the portions of the first and second tubular members, a fluid tight seal is provided by the interface between the tubular sleeve and the ends of the first and second tubular members.

126. (Original) The method of claim 125, wherein the ends of the first and second tubular members are received within the ends of the tubular sleeve.

127. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 125, wherein the ends of the first and second tubular members receive the ends of the tubular sleeve.

128. (Original) The method of claim 125, further comprising:
placing the tubular members within a wellbore; and
then displacing an expansion device through the interiors of the first and second tubular members to radially expand and plastically deform portions of the first and second tubular members.

129. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads
at
an end portion; and

a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member;
wherein the tubular sleeve is in circumferential tension;
wherein the end portion of the first tubular member is in circumferential compression; and
wherein the end portion of the second tubular member is in circumferential compression.

130. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member;
wherein the tubular sleeve is in circumferential compression;
wherein the end portion of the first tubular member is in circumferential tension; and
wherein the end portion of the second tubular member is in circumferential tension.
131. (Original) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member;
wherein the tubular sleeve comprises an internal flange.
132. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member;
wherein the tubular sleeve comprises an external flange.
133. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and

a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member; .
wherein the tubular sleeve further comprises one or more sealing members for sealing the interface between the tubular sleeve and at least one of the tubular members.

134. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at
an end portion;
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member; and
a retaining ring positioned between the end of the first tubular member and the end of the tubular sleeve.
135. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion;
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member; and
a retaining ring positioned between the end of the first tubular member and the other end of the tubular sleeve.
136. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member;
wherein the end of the tubular sleeve is deformed onto the end of the first tubular member.
137. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member;
wherein the other end of the tubular sleeve is deformed onto the end of the second tubular member.

138. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion;
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member; and
a retaining ring coupled to the end of the first tubular member for retaining the tubular sleeve onto the end of the first tubular member.
139. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion;
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member; and
a retaining ring coupled to the end of the second tubular member for retaining the other end of the tubular sleeve onto the end of the second tubular member.
140. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion;
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member; and
a locking ring for coupling the end of the first tubular member to the end of the tubular sleeve.
141. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion;
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member; and
a locking ring for coupling the end of the second tubular member to the other end of the tubular sleeve.
142. (Original) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion;

a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member; and
a structure for receiving the first and second tubular members and the tubular sleeve; wherein the tubular sleeve contacts the interior surface of the structure.

143. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member;
wherein the tubular sleeve further comprises a sealing element coupled to the exterior surface of the tubular sleeve.
144. (Original) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member;
wherein the tubular sleeve is metallic.
145. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member;
wherein the tubular sleeve is non-metallic.
146. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member;
wherein the tubular sleeve is plastic.
147. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;

a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member;
wherein the tubular sleeve is ceramic.

148. (Original) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member;
wherein the tubular sleeve is frangible.

149. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member;
wherein the tubular sleeve comprises one or more longitudinal slots.

150. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member;
wherein the tubular sleeve comprises one or more radial passages.

151. (Original) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member;
wherein the first and second tubular members are amorously bonded.

152. (Original) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;

a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member;
wherein the first and second tubular members are welded.

153. (Withdrawn) An apparatus, comprising:
a tubular sleeve;
a first tubular member coupled to an end of the tubular sleeve comprising internal threads at an end portion; and
a second tubular member coupled to another end of the tubular sleeve comprising external threads at an end portion that engage the internal threads of the end portion of the first tubular member;
wherein the internal threads of the first tubular member and the internal threads of the second tubular member together provide a fluid tight seal.

154. (Cancelled)